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FROM LOU SCHWARTZ
TO GEORGE CHRISTIAN
CITE WH32210

UNCLAS

HERE'S PEARSON - ANDERSON COLUMN IN TODAY'S POST
BEGIN TEXT

RUSK NOT NOTIFIED OF INVASION

BY

DREW PEARSON AND JACK ANDERSON

CHICAGO-GRADUALLY MORE DETAILS ARE LEAKING OUT REGARDING
LAST WEEK'S MOMENTOUS CRISIS INSIDE THE COMMUNIST
WORLD AND THE AFTERMATHS IN WASHINGTON. THE MORE IMPORTANT
DETAILS ARE:

1. THE RUSSIANS SPECIFICALLY ASKED THE U.S.A.-U.S.S.R.
COOPERATION FOR DISARMAMENT AND PEACE IN VIETNAM CONTINUE.
THEY HOPED THIS WOULD NOT BE INTERRUPTED BY DEVELOPMENTS
IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

2. THERE WAS A SLIPUP IN COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE
WHITE HOUSE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT REGARDING THE RUSSIAN
INVASION WHICH CAUSED SECRETARY OF STATE RUSK TO GO BEFORE
THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM COMMITTEE UNAWARE THAT THE INVASION
HAD ALREADY TAKEN PLACE.

3. BORDER TALKS BETWEEN RUSSIAN AND CZECH LEADERS WERE
MUCH MORE ACRIMONIOUS THAN REPORTED EARLIER.

U.S. INTELLIGENCE DID A PRETTY GOOD JOB OF KEEPING
WASHINGTON INFORMED AS TO WHAT WENT ON BETWEEN THE CZECHS
AND RUSSIANS. IT WAS REPORTED THAT AT ONE TIME DURING THE
TALKS AT THE VILLAGE OF CIERNA THE ARGUMENT BECAME SO BITTER
THAT RUSSIAN AND CZECH LEADERS BEGAN CALLING EACH OTHER
"MISTER" INSTEAD OF "COMRADE." THE ANGRY RUSSIANS EVEN
REFUSED TO DRINK CZECH COFFEE WITH THEIR HOSTS.

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U.S. INTELLIGENCE WAS ALSO ALERT AS SOVIET TROOPS CROSSED THE BORDER. THEY FLASHED THE NEWS TO WASHINGTON TWO HOURS BEFORE AMBASSADOR ANATOLY DOBRYNIN CALLED ON PRESIDENT JOHNSON WITH HIS GRIM NOTE.

WHITE HOUSE SLIPUP

HERE WAS WHERE A SLIPUP TOOK PLACE BETWEEN THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT. THE SOVIET EMBASSY CALLED THE WHITE HOUSE AT 7 P.M. SAYING THAT AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN WANTED TO SEE THE PRESIDENT ON AN URGENT MATTER THAT EVENING. HE WAS GIVEN AN APPOINTMENT FOR 8 P.M.

IT IS UNUSUAL FOR ANY AMBASSADOR TO ASK FOR AN URGENT APPOINTMENT WITH THE PRESIDENT AT THAT HOUR, BUT IN VIEW OF THE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REGARDING SOVIET TROOPS CROSSING THE CZECH BORDER IT WAS ASSUMED BY WALT ROSTOW, WHITE HOUSE ASSISTANT FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL SECURITY PROBLEMS, THAT THE AMBASSADOR WISHED TO DISCUSS THE TENSE CZECH SITUATION.

HE ARRIVED PROMPTLY AT 8 P.M.

MEANWHILE, ROSTOW HAD FAILED TO NOTIFY SECRETARY OF STATE RUSK OF THE AMBASSADOR'S CALL. AND AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME - EIGHT O'CLOCK - RUSK WENT BEFORE THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM COMMITTEE AT THE STATLER HILTON HOTEL TO DISCUSS THE VIETNAM WAR PLANK. LATER, AS DRAMATICALLY SHOWN BY CBS ON TELEVISION, RUSK WAS GIVEN THE NEWS OF THE RED ARMY INVASION.

WHY RUSK WAS NOT INFORMED OF THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S PHONE CALL AT 7 P.M. OR THE INTELLIGENCE REPORT AT 6 P.M. HAS NOT BEEN EXPLAINED. THE SNAFU IN THIS CASE WAS NOT TOO IMPORTANT, BUT ILLUSTRATES THE LACK OF COOPERATION WHICH HAS SOMETIMES EXISTED BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT'S ADVISERS IN THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT. THIS WAS WHAT RUSK COMPLAINED ABOUT FREQUENTLY WHEN MCGEORGE BUNDY SERVED AS KENNEDY'S ADVISER ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR OBVIOUSLY WAS ACTING IN A HURRY. BECAUSE HE ARRIVED AT THE WHITE HOUSE WITH A NOTE WHICH HE HAD WRITTEN IN LONGHAND. IT WAS NOT TYPED OUT.

IN ADDITION TO NOTIFYING THE UNITED STATES OF THE MILITARY ACTION AGAINST CZECHOSLOVAKIA, THE NOTE EMPHASIZED THAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT HAD NO WISH TO IMPAIR RUSSIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS. AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN ALSO SUGGESTED THERE WAS NO REASON TO LET THE CZECH CRISIS DISRUPT THE BACKSTAGE TALKS WHICH OUR TWO COUNTRIES HAVE HAD OVER A VIETNAM TRUCE, TOGETHER WITH THEIR MORE FORMAL TALKS OVER DISARMAMENT, THE NONPROLIFERATION TREATY AND OTHER COOPERATION.

AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN, WHO HAS SERVED IN WASHINGTON LONGER THAN ANY OTHER SOVIET AMBASSADOR SINCE THE WAR, HAS BEEN A STRONG SUPPORTER OF AMERICAN-SOVIET COOPERATION. IT IS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT THE MOVE AGAINST CZECHOSLOVAKIA WAS A PERSONAL BLOW TO HIM. HOWEVER, HE DID NOT SHOW THIS IN HIS TALKS WITH PRESIDENT JOHNSON.

NOR DID THE PRESIDENT DISPLAY ANY OUTWARD EMOTION.

THE PRESIDENT HAD BEEN HOPING TO BE INVITED TO THE SOVIET UNION AS THE CROWNING ACT OF HIS CAREER IN ORDER TO START NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN ALL-IMPORTANT MISSILE AGREEMENT. AS AN ALTERNATIVE IT HAD BEEN PROPOSED THAT HE AND PREMIER KOSYGIN MIGHT MEET ON NEUTRAL GROUND, POSSIBLY GENEVA.

THIS MAY STILL TAKE PLACE, THOUGH LATER.

AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN OBVIOUSLY WAS NOT HAPPY OVER THE EVENTS WHICH CHANGED THESE PLANS NOR WAS THE PRESIDENT. THIS WAS WHY THE AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED HIS GOVERNMENT'S HOPE THAT COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES MIGHT CONTINUE.

THE AMBASSADOR WENT IN TO SEE THE PRESIDENT AT 8:15. HE EMERGED AT 9 P.M.

END TEXT

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